

HYMNS IN AN EAST SIDE DIVE.

Girl Missionary Brings Tears to Eyes of Inmates—Mrs. Ayer Studies Conditions.

In the basement of a broken-down wooden building in the Red Light district one of the lowest dives in the quarter is located.

I followed the little girl missionary down the rickety steps and through the shaky door of the resort.

Thirty or forty men and women of the lowest and most degraded types were seated at tables and on benches and a beardless youth of perhaps twenty, a good-looking young fellow, sat in his shirt sleeves, according to the custom of the musicians at these places, before an upright piano. He was playing some sort of a rag-time melody when we entered. His back was to his audience and he held a mongrel black puppy in his lap. The dog snuggled up to the boy and looked into his face with the devoted eyes of the outcast cur who has found a friend at last—and the pianist returned the loving look and fondled the poor beast between the pieces he played. It was a pitiful sight.

Miss Price talked with the pianist a moment.

"I'd jump at the chance," he said, "to get some other work to do. I have hunted high and low without success, but my mother doesn't know of it, thank God. I came from a country town not a hundred miles from here. My parents are Congregationalists. They think I'm all right."

His Life a Hard One.

"Do I like it? Well, do you think any one likes such a life as this? No, I hate it. They all do, if they'd speak out. But what can they do? No one wants these people. They have to come to these places. Lots of 'em have to choose between being taken up as vagrants or asking for a night's lodging in a chair here. When they're in bad luck the boss is good to them. Naturally, when they get a brace they don't forget him. That's the way it is. The dive-keepers are the only friends these people have got."

Miss Price stepped over to the piano. The harsh sounds ceased. The young lad who was playing looked at Miss Price, his hands suddenly still.

"Will you play for me to sing?" she asked.

The youth looked first at the little woman, then at the proprietor; who, as in every case, had greeted Miss Price with the utmost respect.

"Go ahead and play," said the employer.

The Missionary's Song.

The pianist and Miss Price spoke a few words and then the boy struck up the chords of the song "Where is My Wandering Boy To-Night?"

"I wish you would all join in the chorus," Miss Price said, quite as though she were addressing an audience of old friends.

"And," she continued, "we will sing 'Oh, where is my wandering girl' for the second verse."

There was perfect silence for an instant.

Then the clear, sweet voice of the missionary was heard, and, wonder of

wonders, every man and woman in that terrible place joined in the chorus.

Old men, old women, boys, girls from fourteen years upward, men between twenty and thirty, and many voices faltered as the words rung out—one or two broke—and one man near me murmured, "Oh, God, oh, God," and buried his head in his hands.

It was surely a wonderful sight. The habitues of perhaps the toughest dive in the toughest part of New York! Every one of them singing that heart-breaking appeal of the mother for her wandering children. Each man and woman with a history of sin. Each with the memory of a broken-hearted mother.

Not a smile on a face. No ridicule. No scoffing.

Tears in some eyes, absolute apathy in many faces.

It was the apotheosis of hopelessness except for the light that shone in the earnest eyes of the little missionary.

One man near me whispered "God knows what my mother would say if she saw the to-night. I'm just down from doing eighteen months' time."

My dear Evening World friends, when I consented to visit these wretched places it was with one object in view. The Rescue Workers, of whom Miss Price is, I sincerely believe, the most valuable, because she knows these women personally and because her soul is saturated with the divine attributes of love and charity—these Rescue Workers, who know whereof they speak, are convinced that many of these girls and women can be redeemed.

Miss Price already has proof that a woman may be reclaimed no matter how low her condition.

I will not cite instances or particulars, because each one of the rescued girls and women whose histories I know is valiantly striving to forget her unhappy past.

The Past Black.

I will not be the one even by a word to recall a life of vice that is, thank God, forever ended.

But I think you know, dear friends, that you may trust me.

I assure you that many, many girls and women have been restored to honor and happiness by the Rescue Workers. The great obstacle to further success is in the poverty of the organization, which is made up of a few earnest souls who volunteer their services.

The Rescue Workers had a home right in the red-light district, where they could receive and care for the women they would save. It is not dreamed of saving lives and souls as is not dreamed of.

What Miss Price says they need is a place to receive a girl without conditions at any moment of the day or night. I quote this little woman because I have been with her and watched with tears in my eyes and a swelling heart the loving confidence she has won from the particular class of women in this special precinct.

Very soon hundreds of these girls will be thrown into the streets.

When the crusade goes into active effect the police will pull the houses they live in and these poor women will be the first spoils of the law.

They know it. Even now these girls who lately flung their unhappy calling in the windows and on the doorsteps are huddled away in upper back rooms in deadly fear of the beginning of the end.

With a very little money comparatively, scores of them can be sheltered and helped and eventually saved if the Rescue Workers have a place to receive them.

It is with the earnest hope that some of our Evening World readers may join in a movement to this noble end that I have written of these unhappy sister women.

HARRIET HUBBARD AYER.

SUES HIS EX-WIFE AND HER SECOND HUSBAND.



MRS. CHARLES HOLLISTER.

Hollister Asks \$50,000 for His Wounded Heart.

Suing his Dakota-divorced wife for a divorce and demanding \$50,000 damages from her present husband form the double step taken by Charles Hollister, of Mount Vernon. He believes that by recent decisions of the Court of Appeals the decree which his wife obtained in Dakota against him in 1897 is void.

If that is so the beautiful heiress now known as Mrs. Naomi Joyce Valentine is still Mrs. Charles Hollister, and Mr. Hollister wants \$50,000 from Edward Valentine for the loss of her companionship.

The papers in both suits were served upon Mr. and Mrs. Valentine as they left the Duncombe mansion, the finest estate in Mount Vernon, yesterday morning. The couple were married in Stamford, Conn., a few months ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Valentine have for some months been living in the splendid residence of the bride's grandmother, Mrs. Naomi Duncome, of South Third avenue, Mount Vernon. Mrs. Duncome is worth \$2,000,000 and Mrs. Valentine is her sole heir.

As Naomi Joyce, wealthy, beautiful and highly educated, the wife now in dispute was much sought after. Charles Hollister won her affections, but her grandmother, who was her guardian, her father being dead and her mother remarried, did not approve of the girl's choice.

So the couple eloped and were married by the Rev. Mr. Dodd, of Newark, formerly of Mount Vernon. Mr. and Mrs. Hollister went to live with the husband's parents. Not long afterward Mrs. Hollister disappeared. Her grandmother had forgiven her, but not her husband. Hollister went on a fishing trip on the day in question, and when he returned his wife was absent.

Mrs. Duncome said she did not know where she had gone. The case was given to the judge, Chief Justice, and Mrs. Hollister had gone to North Dakota for a divorce. Hollister was too poor to follow. His wife resided in Mandan four months and then received a decree of absolute divorce on the ground of cruelty and non-support.

She was granted also the privilege of resuming her maiden name. She returned to her grandmother's home and last July was married to Valentine.

Justice Andrews has denied the application of Clump & Co., snow contractors, to have declared null and void the successful bid of Kelly & Marco of 36 cents a square yard for the removal of snow and ice from the city streets.

Bids for the work were submitted to the Street-cleaning Commissioner. Kelly & Marco bid 36 cents; Clump & Co. bid 38 cents. Clump & Co. contended that Kelly & Marco's bid should be rejected because one of the sureties is a member of the Municipal Assembly.

Justice Andrews holds that while Kelly & Marco's bid may be presumptively irregular the rejection of it or all bids lies in the discretion of the Commissioner.

WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

What's the difference between a breeze building on the left-hand side of the lawn in front of a brick house that belongs to a bald-headed man who is too mean to give his only daughter music lessons when they are only 25 cents an hour?

AND

a man with red whiskers who has bought a whale for \$175 but can't put a tag on the whale because the whale keeps washing it off?

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